

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 GEORGE 00018 081824Z

63

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 EB-11 AID-20 AGR-20

INT-08 COA-02 COME-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01

DRC-01 /125 W

----- 044211

R 081610Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9207

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

RUE P/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN 1169

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GEORGETOWN 0018

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, GY

SUBJECT: LABOR REACTS TO BURNHAM'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE AND 1974 BUDGET

REF: GEORGETOWN 0008

1. SUMMARY: INCREASING DISSATISFACTION OF ORGANIZED LABOR

WITH GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICY SUGGESTED BY TRADES UNION CONGRESS LEADER RICHARD ISHMAEL'S COMMENTS ON PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE AND HIS ACCOUNT OF MEETING WITH PM. BURNHAM'S MINOR CONCESSIONS INCLUDED IN MESSAGE HAVE FAILED TO QUIET DISCONTENT RAISED BY INFLATION, SHORTAGES, AND INCREASED TAXES. SOME TUC LEADERS EVEN WARNING OF A GENERAL STRIKE, BUT SITUATION WOULD HAVE TO WORSEN CONSIDERABLY BEFORE THIS A REAL POSSIBILITY. END SUMMARY.

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, *RICHARD ISHMAEL, PRESIDENT OF GUYANA TRADES UNION CONGRESS (TUC), SAID PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE (REFTEL) CONTAINED NO ANSWERS TO GUYANA'S
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 GEORGE 00018 081824Z

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. ISHMAEL SAID THAT WORKERS, FACED WITH*
SHORTAGES, INFLATION, AND NOW G\$18 MILLION IN NEW TAXES, WILL

NOT BE SATISFIED WITH BURNHAM'S CONCESSIONS.

3. ISHMAEL TOLD EMBOFF THAT RELIEF MEASURES IN PM'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE WERE RESULT OF MEETING BETWEEN PM AND TUC DELGATION O* DECEMBER 27. TUC DELGATION HEADED BY ISHMAEL, SOUGHT TAX BREAK FOR LOW INCOME GROUP, INTRODUCTION COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCES, AND EASING OF IMPORT BANS ON SOME FOOD ITEMS. ISHMAEL SAID HE OPENED MEETING BY ASKING PM AND MINISTER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT KENNETH KING WHEN THEY HAD LAST GONE INTO MARKET TO SEE PRICES. ISHMAEL WARNED THAT GOVERNMENT WAS OUT OF TOUCH WITH PEOPLE AND THAT WORKERS DISSATISFACTION WAS AT CRITICAL LEVEL. OTHER MEMBERS OF TUC DELGATION ADDED THAT GENERAL STRIKE BY MIDDLE OF 1974 WAS REAL POSSIBILITY IF ECONOMIC SITUATION FURTHER DETERIORATED.

4. ACCORDING TO ISHMAEL, BURNHAM, FREQUENTLY RESORTING TO PROFANITY, REACTED ANGRILY TO TUC SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS. EVENTUALLY, BURNHAM OFFERED COMPROMISE TO TUC. HE AGREED TO MEASURES SUCH AS LOWERING PRICE OF COOKING GAS AND FREEZING RENTS(WHICH WERE MADE PUBLIC IN HIS NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE). IN EXCHANGE, BURNHAM ASKED TUC TO COOPERATE IN INTRODUCTION OF PRICES AND INCOMES POLICY AND TO STATE PUBLICLY TUC WOULD NOT PUSH FOR COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCES. ISHMAEL TOLD EMBOFF THAT TUC DELGATION AGREED ONLY TO TACIT ABANDONING OF COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE DEMANDS AND TO GENERAL DISCUSSION OF PRICES AND INCOMES POLICY. MEETING ENDED WITH AGREEMENT FOR MORE FREQUENT EXCHANGES OF VIEWS BETWEEN PM AND TUC.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH DISSATISFACTION WITH BURNHAM GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO GROW AMONG TRADITIONALLY PRO-BURNHAM TUC (WHICH IS GUYANA'S MAJOR LABOR FEDERATION), ISHMAEL WAS PERHAPS OVERLY DRAMATIC IN HIS ACCOUNT OF MEETING WITH PM. POSSIBILITY OF GENERAL STRIKE BY MID-1974 APPEARS SLIGHT. BURNHAM'S RESERVOIR OF STRENGTH AND STOMACH FOR FIGHT ARE QUESTIONABLE. SOME CONCILIATORY GESTURES ON BURNHAM'S PART COULD DO MUCH TO RESTORE HIS GOOD STANDING WITH ORGANIZED LABOR. HOWEVER, SIMPLE FACT THAT THERE IS TALK OF GENERAL STRIKE INDICATES SEVERITY OF DEVELOPING RIFT BETWEEN LABOR AND GOVERNMENT. LABOR UNION LEADERS ARE FEELING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 GEORGE 00018 081824Z

INCREASING PRESSURE FROM MEMBERSHIP TO "DO SOMETHING" ABOUT PRICES, SHORTAGES, TAXES. IF THEY DECIDE BURNHAM IS NOT LISTENING TO THEM OR IF THEY FEEL HE IS PUSHING TOO HARD ON SENSITIVE ISSUES SUCH AS PRICES AND INCOMES POLICY, LABOR MAY BE PROVOKED INTO INCREASINGLY OPEN OPPOSITION TO BURNHAM GOVERNMENT. KING

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: UNION GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TAXES, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, LABOR OBJECTIVES, RETAIL PRICES, LABOR UNIONS, GENERAL STRIKES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974GEORGE00018
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: GEORGETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740157/aaaacbma.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: GEORGETOWN 0008
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 SEP 2002 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <10-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR REACTS TO BURNHAM'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE AND 1974 BUDGET
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, GY
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005